

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 292921 TOSEC 310378

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 292921 TOSEC 310378

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 9566 SENT ACTION TO SECSTATE DEC 1, 1976

QUOTE S E C R E T GENEVA 9566

NODIS

FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FROM REINHARDT

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJ: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: TALKING POINTS FOR CHONA

1. I HAVE DISCUSSED THE STATE OF THE PLAY IN GENEVA WITH FRANK WISNER AND HAVE READ THE TALKING POINTS WHICH HE PREPARED FOR MY USE WITH MARK CHONA.

2. MY CONVERSATIONS WITH KAUNDA AND NYERERE AND THE TALKS HERE WITH CHONA INDICATE THAT THE FRONT LINE STATES ARE DIGGING IN BEHIND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND ARE REJECTING ANY REASONABLE CONCEPT OF POWER SHARING DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD. CHONA HAS ASKED THAT WE REPLY TO HIS PROPOSALS. TIMING IS IMPORTANT AND I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD TELL CHONA AND SALIM, SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 292921 TOSEC 310378

WHEN HE RETURNS, THAT WE CANNOT BACK OR SELL AN ARRANGEMENT WHICH DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR REASONABLE POWER SHARING. THE LAST TWO PARAGRAPHS OF THE TALKING POINTS PRESENT THIS ARGUMENT AND SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO THE PRESIDENTS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES THAT WE WILL

NOT GO ALONG WITH THE FRAMEWORK WHICH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IS PRESENTING TO THE BRITISH AND THE OTHER GENEVA PARTIES.

3. I AWAIT ANY MODIFICATIONS YOU WISH TO MAKE BEFORE I CALL ON THE OBSERVERS.

BEGIN TALKING POINTS

I HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH WASHINGTON SINCE YOUR MEETINGS WITH FRANK ON MONDAY AND TUESDAY, AND THE POINTS I AM ABOUT TO MAKE REFLECT WASHINGTON'S VIEWS AS WELL AS MY OWN.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER WHAT THE EXERCISE WE ARE ENGAGED IN HERE IS ALL ABOUT. WE ARE HERE TO TRY TO REACH A SETTLEMENT THAT TRANSFERS POWER IN RHODESIA FROM THE HANDS OF WHITES WHO NOW HOLD IT TO AFRICANS WHO RIGHTFULLY DESERVE IT.

WE ARE HERE TO GET A SOLUTION THAT OFFERS THE BEST ASSURANCE OF A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO A MODERATE AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT, ONE THAT CAN BRING STABILITY AND PROSPERITY TO ZIMBABWE, AND ONE THAT WOULD NOT POSE A THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF ITS NEIGHBORS, MOST NOTABLY ZAMBIA.

WE ARE DISTURBED BY WHAT WE PERCEIVE TO BE A GROWING SENSE OF UNREALITY HERE IN GENEVA, NOT ONLY AMONG SOME OF THE NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS, BUT ALSO AMONG THE OBSERVERS.

SOMEHOW, THERE APPEARS AN INCREASING TENDENCY TO IGNORE SOME OF THE FUNDAMENTAL REALITIES OF THE RHODESIAN SITUATION:

THE FIRST OF THESE REALITIES IS THAT IAN SMITH AND
SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 292921 TOSEC 310378

THE RHODESIA FRONT HOLD DE FACTO POWER IN RHODESIA, NOT THE SOUTH AFRICANS, NOT THE BRITISH, AND CERTAINLY NOT THE UNITED STATES. NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE MAY DISLIKE THAT SITUATION, IT IS NOT SOMETHING THAT CAN BE WISHED AWAY.

SECOND, THERE ARE LIMITATIONS ON THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE THAT EXTERNAL POWERS CAN EFFECTIVELY EXERCISE IN TRYING TO BRING SMITH TO ACCEPT A SETTLEMENT WHICH EFFECTIVELY GUARANTEES HIS OWN DEMISE. IN LARGE MEASURE THOSE LIMITS ARE DETERMINED BY DOMESTIC POLITICAL REALITIES IN BRITAIN, IN SOUTH AFRICA AND IN THE U.S. WHICH MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO SELL AT HOME OR TO PRESS UPON SMITH ANY SETTLEMENT TERMS WHICH DO NOT PROVIDE

DUE ASSURANCES FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF MINORITY INTERESTS
IN RHODESIA.

THE THIRD POINT CONCERNS THOSE UNDERSTANDINGS WHICH
PERSUADED SMITH TO ACCEPT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS 12
YEARS IN POWER, THE PRINCIPLE OF MAJORITY RULE AND THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THAT PRINCIPLE WITHIN A FIXED TIME
FRAME. WHATEVER ONE CHOOSES TO SAY ABOUT THE FIVE
POINTS OF SMITH'S SEPTEMBER 24 SPEECH, AND PARTICULARLY
POINT 3, THERE CAN BE NO DISAGREEMENT OVER THE FACT THAT
IT WAS ON THIS BASIS, AND THIS BASIS ALONE, THAT SMITH
WAS PERSUADED TO ACCEPT THE CONCEPT OF MAJORITY RULE.
NOR CAN THERE BE ANY ARGUMENT OVER THE FACT THAT THE
CONCEPT THAT UNDERLIES THE FIVE POINTS AND THAT MADE
POSSIBLE SMITH'S ACCEPTANCE OF THEM - AS WELL AS THAT OF
HIS PARTY - IS THE CONCEPT THAT RHODESIAN WHITES WOULD
BE ASSURED OF A MEANINGFUL VOICE AND ROLE IN THE POLITICAL
DECISIONS IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD THAT WILL AFFECT THEIR
FUTURE IN ZIMBABWE.

WE HAVE HEARD THE VIEW EXPRESSED BY SEVERAL PERSONS
HERE IN GENEVA THAT SMITH AND THE RHODESIA FRONT MAY NOW
BE READY TO ABANDON THE CONCEPT OF SHARED POWER IN THE
INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN EXCHANGE FOR VAGUE AND AMBIGUOUS
PROMISES OR UNDERSTANDINGS. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD IT SAID
THAT THE UNITED STATES CAN DELIVER SMITH UPON DEMAND AND
GET HIM TO ACCEPT ANY ALTERNATIVE SET OF PROPOSALS THAT
SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 292921 TOSEC 310378

MIGHT BE PUT FORWARD AT THE CONFERENCE. WITH REGARD TO
THE FIRST POINT, NOTHING SMITH HAS SAID OR IMPLIED
SINCE THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE OFFERS ANY SUGGES-
TION THAT HE IS PREPARED TO ABANDON THE CONCEPT THAT
RHODESIA WHITES MUST HAVE EFFECTIVE AND CLEARLY DEFINED
POWERS WITHIN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. WITH REGARD TO
THE SECOND, ANYONE WHO THINKS THAT WE CAN PERSUADE OR
COERCE SMITH INTO ACCEPTING A SETTLEMENT ON ANY OTHER
TERMS FAILS TO UNDERSTAND THE REAL LIMITATIONS OF
AMERICAN POWER.

WE MUST BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO MISINTERPRET WHAT SMITH
IS SAYING OR TO READ INTO HIS STATEMENTS AND THOSE OF
HIS RETINUE ONLY WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR.

OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT SMITH AND THE RHODESIANS ARE
FULLY PREPARED TO FIGHT ON AND TO RESIST ALL FORMS OF
PRESSURE IF THEY DO NOT GET THE KIND OF SETTLEMENT HERE
THAT THEY FEEL MEETS THEIR MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS. THEY
HAVE NOT BEEN UNSECCESFUL IN THIS RESPECT. THEIR RECENT
RAIDS INTO MOZAMBIQUE HAVE RESTORED SOME OF THEIR CON-
FIDENCE. THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT THEY HAVE DEALT SERIOUS
BLOWS TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND THAT THEY CAN CONTINUE

TO DO SO FOR A LONG TIME TO COME.

MOREOVER, THE RHODESIANS SENSE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A SHIFT IN WORLD OPINION ABOUT THEIR SITUATION SINCE THE NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN. BY REPEATING HIS READINESS TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT HE HAS ATTEMPTED TO PROJECT AN IMAGE OF REASONABLENESS, AND THE NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS HERE HAVE PLAYED INTO HIS HANDS BY APPEARING TO DEMAND NOT NEGOTIATION BUT UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER. WE ARE ESPECIALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE VERY EVIDENT EROSION OF SUPPORT IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR A SETTLEMENT, WHICH COULD TIE VORSTER'S HANDS AND PREVENT HIM FROM CONTINUING HIS POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION NOT ONLY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE BUT ALSO NAMIBIA.

THOSE OF US WHO BEAR A HEAVY BURDEN OF RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR RESPECTIVE NATIONS CANNOT AFFORD TO BE ROMANTIC OR SENTIMENTAL ABOUT WAR. IF WE FAIL TO GET A SETTLEMENT
SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 292921 TOSEC 310378

HERE, IT IS NOT THE UNITED STATES THAT WILL SUFFER MOST DIRECTLY FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT FAILURE. THOSE WHO WILL SUFFER MOST WILL BE THE ZIMBABWEANS, WHO FACE THE PROSPECT OF HAVING A WHOLE GENERATION OF YOUTH CHEWED UP IN NEEDLESS BLOODSHED, AND WHOSE ONLY REWARD WILL BE A COUNTRY RAVAGED BY WAR AND DESTRUCTION.

RHODESIA'S NEIGHBORS, ZAMBIA IN PARTICULAR, WOULD PAY A HEAVY PRICE IF THE WAR IS ALLOWED TO DRAY ON, AND NOT MERELY IN ECONOMIC TERMS. ZAMBIA ALREADY KNOWS WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE FOREIGN ARMIES LIVING IN ARMED CAMPS ON ITS SOIL AND HOW DIFFICULT IT CAN BE TO CONTROL THEM. THE LEBANESE EXPERIENCE STANDS AS AN EXAMPLE TO ALL OF HOW DISRUPTIVE A FORCE THESE ARMIES CAN BECOME.

YOU MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IF CONTINUING VIOLENCE LEADS TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION, THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT STAND IDLY BY.

WE CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN OF ZIPA AND YOUR DESIRE NOT TO PROVIDE THOSE WHO WISH TO SEE THE CONFERENCE FAIL WITH THE EXCUSE THEY ARE LOOKING FOR. BUT WE FAIL TO COMPREHEND HOW ZAMBIA'S INTERESTS, OR ZIMBABWE'S EITHER, WOULD BE SERVED BY A SOLUTION THAT MERELY PLACES POWER IN THE HANDS OF THE MILITANTS WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY DISCIPLINE OR RESTRAINT ON THE EXERCISE OF THAT POWER.

NOR DO WE UNDERSTAND THE ARGUMENT FOR GIVING INTO ZIPA'S DEMAND FOR INSTANT MAJORITY RULE, WHICH SEEMS TO US TO BE CONTRARY TO ZAMBIA'S OWN INTERESTS, AND WHICH WILL ALSO DESTROY ANY CHANCE OF GETTING A SETTLEMENT.

ONE CANNOT TALK ABOUT NEGOTIATION UNLESS ONE TALKS OF COMPROMISE. SIMILARLY, TRANSITION MEANS JUST THAT, NOT AN INSTANTANEOUS AND TOTAL REVERSAL OF EXISTING POWER RELATIONSHIPS. OBVIOUSLY SMITH WILL HAVE MORE POWER AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRANSITION THAN AT THE END.

THE UNITED STATES IS NOT PREPARED TO LIVE WITH ANY SOLUTION THAT DOES NOT RESULT IN THE EFFECTIVE TRANSFER TO THE AFRICAN MAJORITY BY THE END OF THE INTERIM PERIOD.

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 292921 TOSEC 310378

FOR A SOLUTION TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO US, IT MUST ALSO BE A SOLUTION THAT IN 9-15 MONTHS CAN BE SUPPORTED BY THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS AND SOLD TO THE OAU. IN OTHER WORDS, ZIMBABWE'S VICTORY IS ASSURED, AND ANY TALK TO A SECOND UDI IS BASELESS AND ABSURD. WE WILL OPPOSE ANY MOVE SHARPLY AND CAN COUNT ON SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT IN THIS REGARD.

HOWEVER FLAWED THE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS OUTLINED IN THE FIVE POINTS MAY APPEAR, WE MUST REMEMBER THAT THEY WERE THE BASIS ON WHICH SMITH WAS HOOKED INTO THE PROCESS OF SURRENDERING HIS OWN POSITION AND POWER. HIS ONLY CONDITION WAS AND REMAINS THAT WHITES MUST SHARE POWER DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT SMITH REALLY WANTS OR EXPECTS, BUT WE MUST ASSUME THAT HE WANTS ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS IN THE FORM OF CHECKS AND BALANCES THAT WILL GIVE HIM THE ABILITY TO LIMIT WHAT WHITES FEAR MOST ABOUT THE TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE. AND WE MUST ALSO ASSUME THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH CLEARLY DEFINED AND INSTITUTIONALIZED SAFEGUARDS, SMITH CANNOT HOPE TO SELL A SETTLEMENT TO HIS OWN CONSTITUENTS IN RHODESIA.

THE NAME OF THE GAME IS TO KEEP HIM HOOKED AND NOT MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO WIGGLE OFF.

THERE IS A LOT THE BRITISH CAN DO TO MAKE THE STRUCTURE OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT FUNCTION MORE SMOOTHLY AND EFFECTIVELY. WE BELIEVE THEY ARE PREPARED TO PLAY A ROLE, AND WE ARE PREPARED TO PUSH THEM IN THAT DIRECTION. BUT WE CANNOT EXPECT THE BRITISH TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITIES IN RHODESIA THAT THEY HAVE NEVER HAD AND FOR WHICH THEY LACK THE AUTHORITY TO BACK THEM UP. THEY ARE WILLING TO BRIDGE THE GAP, BUT YOU MUST BE VERY PRECISE AND VERY REALISTIC ABOUT WHAT YOU EXPECT OF THEM. THEY CAN PROVIDE THE ADDITIONAL MARGIN OF ASSURANCE FOR BOTH SIDES; BUT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THE BRITISH ROLE CANNOT TAKE THE PLACE OF A BASIC AGREEMENT AMONG THE PARTIES THEMSELVES WHICH DEFINES IN CLEAR AND UNAMBIGUOUS TERMS THE POWERS THAT EACH WILL EXERCISE IN THE INTERIM PERIOD. BRITAIN CANNOT BE USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR A

SECRET

PAGE 07 STATE 292921 TOSEC 310378

RHODESIAN PRESENCE IN INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS. IN THE LONG TERM, ONLY AN AGREEMENT SUCH AS THIS-NOT AMBIGUOUS PROMISES OR UNDERSTANDINGS-CAN PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN ZIMBABWE.

THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF OUR COMMON EFFORT TO FIND A SETTLEMENT, NO NATION HAS HAD CLEARER VISION THAN ZAMBIA. NO NATION ATTACHES GREATER IMPORTANCE TO A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME, ONE THAT BRINGS A MODERATE, PRAGMATIC AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT TO ZIMBABWE. WE BELIEVE THAT OTHER NATIONS WILL RECOGNIZE AND ACCEPT THE FACT THAT ZAMBIA FACES GREATER RISKS THAN ANYONE ELSE IF OUR EFFORTS FAIL; AND AS A RESULT, WE BELIEVE THAT YOUR WORD WILL BE HEEDDED AND ACCEPTED BY THE OTHER FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS AND BY AFRICAN LEADERS GENERALLY. IT IS UP TO ZAMBIA, BEING CLOSEST TO THE PROBLEM, TO REMIND THE OTHERS OF HOW DANGEROUS THE SITUATION CAN BECOME IF A SETTLEMENT BASED ON COMPROMISE IS NOT ACHIEVED.

IT IS IMPORTANT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO RETHINK ITS POSITION AND NEGOTIATE PROPOSALS WHICH PROVIDE FOR POWER SHARING WITH RHODESIAN EUROPEANS DURING THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION.

THE UNITED STATES CANNOT SELL TO SMITH OR TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS A SET OF PROPOSALS WHICH DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR REASONABLE POWER SHARING DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD.

THE FRAMEWORK WHICH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT APPEARS TO BE ADVANCING DOES NOT MEET THIS CRITERIA AND CANNOT, THEREFORE, ENJOY OUR SUPPORT.

END TALKING POINTS.CATTO UNQUOTE ROBINSON

SECRET

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